

time as a legal-sized claw is removed, provided it is held in a container that is shaded from direct sunlight and it is wet with sea water as necessary to keep it in a damp condition. Containers holding stone crabs must be stacked in a manner that does not compress the crabs. A stone crab body from which a legal-sized claw has been removed must be returned to the sea before the vessel reaches shore or a port or dock.

§ 654.22 Gear restrictions.

(a) *Trap construction requirements.* No person fishing for stone crab may transport on the water or fish with any trap which does not meet the following requirements:

(1) Each trap must be constructed of wood, plastic, or wire.

(2) A trap may be no larger in dimension than 24 by 24 by 24 inches (61 by 61 by 61 cm) or 8.0 ft³ (0.23 m³).

(3) The throats (entrances) to all wood and plastic traps must be located on the top horizontal section of the trap. If the throat is longer in one dimension, the throat size in the longer dimension must not exceed 5½ inches (14.0 cm) and in the shorter dimension must not exceed 3½ inches (9.0 cm). If the throat is round, the throat size must not exceed 5 inches (12.7 cm) in diameter.

(4) In any wire trap used to harvest stone crabs, each throat must be horizontally oriented. The width of the opening where the throat meets the vertical wall of the trap and the opening of the throat at its farthest point from the vertical wall, inside the trap, must be greater than the height of any such opening. No such throat may extend farther than 6 inches (15.2 cm) into the inside of any trap, measured from where the throat opening meets the vertical wall of the trap to the throat opening at its farthest point from the vertical wall, inside the trap.

(5) A wire trap must have at least three unobstructed escape rings installed, each with a minimum inside diameter of 2¾ inches (6.0 cm). One such escape ring must be located on a vertical outer surface adjacent to each crab retaining chamber.

(6) A plastic or wire trap must have a degradable panel.

(i) A plastic trap will be considered to have degradable panel if it contains at least one sidewall with a rectangular opening no smaller in either dimension than that of the throat. This opening may be obstructed only with a cypress or untreated pine slat or slats no thicker than ¾ inch (1.9 cm) such that when the slat degrades, the opening in the sidewall of the trap will no longer be obstructed.

(ii) A wire trap will be considered to have a degradable panel if one of the following methods is used in construction of the trap:

(A) The trap lid tie-down strap is secured to the trap at one end by a single loop of untreated jute twine, a corrodible loop composed of non-coated steel wire measuring 24 gauge or thinner, or an untreated pine dowel no larger than 2 inches (5.1 cm) in length by ¾ inch (0.95 cm) in diameter. The trap lid must be secured so that when the jute, corrodible loop, or pine dowel degrades, the lid will no longer be securely closed.

(B) The trap contains at least one sidewall with a vertical rectangular opening no smaller in either dimension than 6 inches (15.2 cm) in height by 3 inches (7.6 cm) in width. This opening may be laced, sewn, or otherwise obstructed by—

(1) A single length of untreated jute twine knotted only at each end and not tied or looped more than once around a single mesh bar;

(2) Untreated pine slat(s) no thicker than ¾ inch (0.95 cm);

(3) Non-coated steel wire measuring 24 gauge or thinner;

(4) A panel of ferrous single-dipped galvanized wire mesh made of 24 gauge or thinner wire; or

(5) A rectangular panel made of any material, fastened to the trap at each of the four corners of the rectangle by rings made of non-coated 24 gauge or thinner wire or single strands of untreated jute twine. When the jute, untreated pine slat(s), non-coated steel wire, wire mesh panel, or corner fasteners degrade, the opening in the sidewall of the trap must no longer be obstructed.

(b) *Daylight hours.* A stone crab trap in the management area may be pulled or tended during daylight hours only—

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that is, from 1 hour before sunrise to 1 hour after sunset.

(c) *Gear belonging to others.* No fisherman may willfully tend, open, pull, or otherwise molest another fisherman's trap, buoy, or line in the management area without the prior written consent of that fisherman.

[60 FR 13919, Mar. 15, 1995, as amended at 65 FR 31835, May 19, 2000]

§ 654.23 Southwest Florida seasonal trawl closure.

From January 1 to 1 hour after sunset (local time) May 20, each year, the area described in this section is closed to trawling, including trawling for live bait. The area is that part of the management area shoreward of a line connecting the following points (see Appendix A, Figure 2, of this part):

| Point | North Latitude | West Longitude |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| B ¹ | 26°16' | 81°58.5' |
| C | 26°00' | 82°04' |
| D | 25°09' | 81°47.6' |
| E | 24°54.5' | 81°50.5' |

| Point | North latitude | West longitude | Loran Chain 7980 | | | |
|---------|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | | W | X | Y | Z |
| A | 28°59'30" | 82°45'36" | 14416.5 | 31409.4 | 45259.1 | 62895.3 |
| B | 28°59'30" | 83°00'10" | 14396.0 | 31386.3 | 45376.8 | 63000.0 |
| C | 28°26'01" | 82°59'47" | 14301.5 | 31205.9 | 45103.2 | 63000.0 |
| D | 28°26'01" | 82°56'54" | 14307.0 | 31212.2 | 45080.0 | 62981.3 |
| E | 28°41'39" | 82°55'25" | 14353.7 | 31300.2 | 45193.9 | 62970.0 |
| F | 28°41'39" | 82°56'09" | 14352.4 | 31298.6 | 45199.4 | 62975.0 |
| G | 28°48'56" | 82°56'19" | 14372.6 | 31337.2 | 45260.0 | 62975.0 |
| H | 28°53'51" | 82°51'19" | 14393.9 | 31371.8 | 45260.0 | 62938.7 |
| I | 28°54'43" | 82°44'52" | (¹) | (¹) | (¹) | (¹) |
| J | 28°51'09" | 82°44'00" | (²) | (²) | (²) | (²) |
| K | 28°50'59" | 82°54'16" | 14381.6 | 31351.8 | 45260.0 | 62960.0 |
| L | 28°41'39" | 82°53'56" | 14356.2 | 31303.0 | 45181.7 | 62960.0 |
| M | 28°41'39" | 82°38'46" | (³) | (³) | (³) | (³) |
| N | 28°41'39" | 82°53'12" | 14357.4 | 31304.4 | 45176.0 | 62955.0 |
| O | 28°30'51" | 82°55'11" | 14323.7 | 31242.4 | 45104.9 | 62970.0 |
| P | 28°40'00" | 82°53'08" | 14352.9 | 31295.7 | 45161.8 | 62955.0 |
| Q | 28°40'00" | 82°47'58" | 14361.3 | 31305.4 | 45120.0 | 62920.0 |
| R | 28°35'14" | 82°47'47" | 14348.6 | 31280.6 | 45080.0 | 62920.0 |
| S | 28°30'51" | 82°52'55" | 14327.7 | 31247.0 | 45086.6 | 62955.0 |
| T | 28°27'46" | 82°55'09" | 14315.2 | 31225.8 | 45080.0 | 62970.0 |
| U | 28°30'51" | 82°52'09" | 14329.1 | 31248.6 | 45080.0 | 62949.9 |

¹ Crystal River Entrance Light 1A.

² Long Pt. (southwest tip).

³ Shoreline.

(a) *Zone I* is enclosed by rhumb lines connecting, in order, points A, B, C, D, T, E, F, G, H, I, and J, plus the shoreline between points A and J. It is unlawful to trawl in that part of Zone I

| Point | North Latitude | West Longitude |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| M ¹ | 24°49.3' | 81°46.4' |

¹ On the seaward limit of Florida's waters.

§ 654.24 Shrimp/stone crab separation zones.

Five zones are established in the management area and Florida's waters off Citrus and Hernando Counties for the separation of shrimp trawling and stone crab trapping. The zones are as shown in Appendix A, Figure 3, of this part. Although Zone II is entirely within Florida's waters, it is included in this section and Appendix A, Figure 3, of this part for the convenience of fishermen. Restrictions that apply to Zone II and those parts of the other zones that are in Florida's waters are contained in Rule 46-38.001, Florida Administrative Code. Geographical coordinates of the points referred to in this paragraph and shown in Appendix A, Figure 3, of this part are as follows (loran readings are unofficial and are included only for the convenience of fishermen):

that is in the EEZ during the period October 5 through May 20, each year.

(b) *Zone II* is enclosed by rhumb lines connecting, in order, points J, I, H, K, L, and M, plus the shoreline between points J and M.